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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/819,462	03/28/2001	Carl Steven Baumann	END9 2000 0165 US1	3427
44755 7590 07/25/2008 SHELLEY M BECKSTRAND PATENT ATTORNEY 61 GLENMONT ROAD WOODLAWN, VA 24381				
EXAMINER				
MILEF, ELDA G				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3692				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/819,462

Applicant(s)

BAUMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Elda Milef

Art Unit

3692

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 May 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 10-13, 17 and 19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 10-13, 17 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/C)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Claims

1. This office action is in response to the amendments submitted by the applicants on 5/12/2008.

- Claims 2-9, 14-16, 18 are cancelled.
- Claims 1,13,17,19 are amended.
- Claims 1, 10-13, 17, 19 are pending in the application.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/27/2008 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1, 10-12, 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The Examiner could not find support in the specification for "receivable commodities including selected commodities that do not flow through a receiving dock where a dock worker creates a receipt transaction into an application..." as recited by the applicant in claim 1 lines 12-17.

Although support for "(1) Providing notification 420 to requestor 46 that an invoice 89 requiring positive confirmation has been received." (specification p. 10 lines 16-18 and "confirmation bridge 426 provides for making inbound invoice 89 line items requiring positive confirmation" on p. 11 lines 8-12, the Examiner could not find support in the specification for the newly added claim limitation: "an item marked on said purchase order at the time of requisition as requiring positive confirmation."

The Examiner found support on p. 13 lines 1-9 of the specification for "Companies for which the procurement services system (SAP) are provided have the option of designating commodities as either receivable or non-receivable ". The Examiner could not find support specifically referencing a commodity item and commodities marked as receivable on said purchase order at the time of requisition as required in claims 1 and 17.

Claims 10-12 are rejected because of their dependency to the rejected claims.

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Lines 10-17 of claim 1 and lines 11-15 of claim 17 are confusing. It is unclear how a selected commodity that does not flow through a receiving dock can have a receipt created by a dock worker. Clarification is required.

Claims 10-12 are rejected because of their dependency to the rejected claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 10-13, 17, 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,507,826 Maners in view of *University of New Hampshire Financial and Administrative Procedures*,

(http://www.finadmin.unh.edu/pol_proc/chapter_23/pro23_051.html; Issued by Computing and Information Services; Issued Date:01/01/94; retrieved date 9/11/06) hereinafter, Procedures in further view of Furphy et al. (hereinafter Furphy, US Patent No.6,882,983).

Re Claim 1: Maners discloses the invention substantially as claimed including in a method for approving and paying an invoice for commodities (Abstract), the steps of:
receiving a requisition from a requestor of commodities (Col. 2, lines 6-26);
marking said commodities upon said requisition as either receivable or non-receivable commodities (Col. 5, lines 40-50; Col. 6 lines 48-67 (dependent invoices can be marked as "incomplete", refused, or "operational hold", Fig. 4);

receivable commodities including selected commodities that do not flow through a receiving dock. Maners discloses marking said commodity as "posted" status which indicates that the invoice has been processed by the MicroEDI server and determined valid and submitted to the company accounts payable system for payment processing. —see Fig. 4 and col. 6 lines 48-67. The system and method disclosed by Maners allows vendors to invoice a company for items such as products and services—see col. 5 lines 64-67; col. 8 lines 21-23, (services do not flow through a receiving dock as disclosed by the applicant on p.5 of the specification).

receiving said invoice for commodities from a vendor, said invoice referencing said purchase order; responsive to receipt of said invoice, matching said invoice to said purchase order and determining if said invoice relates to an item designated on said

invoice as receivable (Col. 5 lines 40-58; Col. 6, lines 49-62; col. 7 lines 1-29; Fig. 4 "Order No.");

upon determining that said invoice includes an item marked on said purchase order at the time of requisition as requiring positive confirmation, blocking payment of said invoice ("Additionally, invoices can be associated with preexisting order numbers, representing dependent invoices...The vendor, ...can select to view details or any one of the invoices...add or change information in any of the incomplete invoices or add a new invoice...And an invoice that has been assigned "operational hold" status is being held from validation and posting until certain information and/or authorization can be obtained by the MicroEDI Server 202...authorization to be entered in the Micro EDI server 202 by company personnel.")-see col. 6 lines 44-67 ;

generating from said invoice a notification to an authorizer that includes information needed to pay the invoice and choices of authorizing or rejecting payment (Col. 6 lines 64-67).;

for commodities marked as receivable, executing a positive confirmation process (Col. 5 lines 40-50; Col. 6, lines 6-65; Col. 7 line 56 to Col. 8 line 6), including:

for commodities marked as non-receivable, executing a negative confirmation process (Col. 5, lines 40-58).

Maners further discloses the use of buttons to select among alternatives (Figs. 4-9) and alternative selection between authorizing (approved) and rejecting (refused) invoices (Fig. 3). Maners does not specifically disclose that a button is used to select

between these alternatives. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Maners to use a selection button to authorize or reject an invoice because this would provide a familiar and easily used interface element for an authorizer to indicate such a choice.

Maners further discloses positive and negative "processing"; the "processing" is directly related to positive or negative approvals of invoices for purchased commodities, as cited.

Maners teaches an invoice processing system including an invoice processing server providing a payment authorization signal to an accounting computer system to initiate processing payment of the invoice in response to determining the invoice is authorized for payment.-see Abstract and col. 9 lines 23-44.

The Claims further recite the limitation of creating an automated receipt transaction file including a goods receipt and entering said transaction file into an enterprise resource planning system for payment. Maners does not specifically disclose this limitation. Procedures discloses these limitations on pages 1-11, particularly page 1, underlined text and lines 3-5 wherein Procedures discloses ("Special conditions...are also captured on the receipt."), also refer to pages 3, 5, 8, and 10. Procedures discloses a three way match system including matching information disclosed on a purchase order, invoice, and received goods, and the generating of a receipt. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Maners to include the three way matching disclosed by Procedures because this would have assured that goods ordered were indeed delivered per purchase order and

approved by recipient.

Although Maners disclose "The Micro EDI Database 214 normally stores invoice data 216 and other related reference data 218. The MicroEDI Server 202 can receive/transmit invoice data 216 and other related reference data 218 with the company's computer system 206 handling the accounting functions for the company...can receive/transmit certain invoice data from/to the computer system 210 at the vendor site." (col. 5 lines 4-21) as well as the use of Internet and Intranet(col. 3 line 41 to col. 5 line 22) , Maners do not explicitly disclose responsive to a response entered by said requestor rejecting payment, creating an e-mail notification to accounts payable for returning said invoice to said vendor. Furphy however, teaches a communication interface and notification of buying company or selling company in resolving discrepancies between the invoice and purchase order data. col. 4 lines 18-35. and E-mail notification –see Fig. 8 and related text; col. 15 lines 49-65. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to include in the invoice processing system of Maners and the three way match system of Procedures the ability to send an e-mail notification to accounts payable as taught by Furphy since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Re Claim 10: Maners does not specifically disclose scheduled sending of payment acceptances to a backend procurement system. Official Notice is taken that it was old and well known to schedule financial data transfers for regular transmission.

For example, batch processing was a familiar way to transfer data. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to perform such data transfer in Maners because this would provide timely, predictable workloads for the system.

Furthermore, Maners discloses communication between the MicroEDI Server and with the computer system at a vendor site via a network server-see col. 3 line 40 to col. 5. Maners does not specifically disclose the steps of recording a goods receipt indicating the acceptance or rejection of payment of an invoice by said requestor to a database. Furphy however, teaches ("Both buying companies 11 and selling companies 13 provide their purchase order data, receipt data, and invoice data to the interactive platform 15, where the data is managed, discrepancies resolved, payments provided for, and records kept. The trading partners complete transactions and communicating with each other via the interactive platform 15. Reports relating to transactions, financial data, and other accounting data are available via the interactive platform 15...The interactive platform 15 conduct these accounts receivable and accounts payable operations utilized identical data from a single database.")-see col. 5 lines 20-42; col. 2 lines 57-67; col. 10 lines 40-42; col. 11 lines 30-67; col. 13 lines 15-23, 40-52; col. 15 in particular the following passage ("The data regarding the various transactions and resolutions of the present invention are stored for report generations, historical and audit purposes. These data may be obtained through various databases..."). It is obvious from the teachings of Furphy that information is continually sent and updated to the procurement system and thus in the database because of the

constant influx and change of data relating to order processing namely accounts receivable, accounts payable and receipt data. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Maners and Procedures to specifically disclose the steps of recording a goods receipt to a database as taught by Furphy in order to process transactions and remit funds to the parties involved in the transactions in a timely manner.

Re Claim 11: see the discussion of claim 10. Furthermore, Maners discloses posting of accepted invoices to the company accounts payable computer system for payment processing.-see col. 5 lines 40-53; col. 6 lines 48-67.

Re Claim 12: Maners does not specifically disclose notification of a confirmation notice at login. Official Notice is taken that it was old and well known to provide important information to a user upon first access to a data system. For example, the notification "You've got mail!" was used to draw a users attention to new incoming e-mail. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Maners to include such notification upon login because this would provide timely notification of a user of important information regarding payment authorization.

Re Claim 13: see the discussion of Claims 1 and 10. Furthermore, Furphy discloses a system of authorizing a payment of an invoice by comparing the invoice to a receipt.-see cols. 1 to 3; col. 15 lines 34-64 in particular comparing purchase order data, the invoice data and the receipt data. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Maners and

Procedures to specifically include authorizing payment by comparing purchase order data with invoice data and receipt data as taught by Furphy in order to reduce redundancies in the discrepancy resolution process and reduce the unnecessary administrative infrastructure associated with the processing of invoices and purchase orders.

Re Claim 17: see the discussion of Claims 1 and 13 above and Maners further discloses a program storage device embodying instructions to perform the recited steps at Fig. 2, ele. 202 and related text. Furthermore, Maners teaches determining if an item for goods on said invoice is for a commodity item marked on said purchase order as receivable or non-receivable. (Col. 5, lines 40-50 (validation of invoice data, posting in the company's accounting system); Col. 6 lines 48-67 (dependent invoices can be marked as "incomplete", refused, or "operational hold", Fig. 4)—see col. 7 lines 25-col. 8 line 5 and cols. 1-2, Fig. 4 and related text. Maners teaches ("This purchase order information is considered part of the reference data 218 that is exchanged between the company accounting system 206 and the MicroEDI Database 214 via the local area network 204.)—see col. 7 lines 24-29. It is obvious that for the authorization for an invoice to be paid, and for the invoice to reflect the status as posted, incomplete, ready or refused, the information included in the purchase order is exchanged between the systems disclosed by Maners.

Re Claim 19: see the discussion of Claims 1 and 17.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 5/27/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding the applicant's argument that Maners do not teach marking commodities upon requisition as either receivable or non-receivable, the applicant's attention is directed to column 5 wherein Maners teaches a server that can receive invoice information from vendors to accept two types of invoices for processing (i.e., (1) a dependent invoice where the order reference information such as a purchase order number is always included with the invoice information, and (2) an orphan invoice, an invoice that does not have order reference information). Maners col. 6 lines 39-67 disclose that dependent invoices as well as orphan invoices are assigned a status such as "posted" meaning that an invoice has been determined valid and is submitted to the company accounts payable computer system for payment processing [receivable]. Maners further disclose that an invoice may be assigned a refused status or operational hold status [non-receivable].

Regarding the applicant's suggestion that in Maners there is no reference to how the goods or services purchased are actually verified as being delivered or rendered for payment, the applicant is directed to column 2 lines 1-57; columns 5-6.

Regarding the applicant's argument that Furphy do not teach generating a goods receipts, the applicant's attention is directed to Furphy col. 1 lines 30-33 wherein Furphy describes creating a receipt document.

Applicant's remaining arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elda Milef whose telephone number is (571)272-8124. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday -Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kambiz Abdi can be reached on (571)272-6702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Kambiz Abdi/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3692

Elda Milef
Examiner
Art Unit 3692